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THE BAHIA [BRAZIL] MISSION.

FOREIGN MISSION BOARD, SO. BAPTIST CONVENTION,
RICHMOND, VA.

H. A. TUPPER, Cor. Secretary.

The Bahia (Brazil) Mission.

By Z. C. TAYLOR.

ON the last day of August, 1882, W. B. Bagby and wife, Snr. Teixeira and Z. C. Taylor and wife, landed at Bahia, having received permission of the Board to transfer to this city our first mission in Brazil. Brother and Sister Bagby had labored in Santa Barbara. On the 15th of October of the same year the first Baptist church for natives was organized, composed of the above mentioned five.

On the 1st of December we rented a large hall for preaching.. We occupied the month of December in preparation, beginning to preach the gospel publicly in the Portuguese language in January, 1883. Our first three converts were females and members of our households, one being in each of the three families.

Success was started in the conversion of our first male convert, Joao Baptista, which took place in June. He was instrumental first in leading his aged mother to Christ, afterwards Pedro do O, then others, among whom stands Marcolino Dorea, one of our deacons, whose piety and devotion are scarcely excelled in any Christian land. Joao Baptista was the first Brazilian ordained after our arrival there, Snr. Teixeira having been ordained by the American church at Santa Barbara a year or two before the Board had missions in Brazil.

Brother Bagby and wife, with one other member, withdrew from us in June, 1884, to establish a mission at Rio de Janeiro.

Rev. Teixeira, wife and son, left Bahia February, 1885, to preach the gospel in his native city, Maceio, where in May following I aided him in organizing a church of ten members.

Rev. W. Mello Lins was baptized in Pernambuco, May 3d, 1885, and entered the organization of the church at Maceio. After having preached the gospel acceptably for several months in and around Maceio, he was ordained by call of that church. Shortly afterwards he returned to Pernambuco and began preaching. Conversions followed, and in May, 1886, Rev. C. D. Daniel joined him. They organized a church of seven members within two weeks. Brother

Daniel returned to Bahia in June, leaving brother Lins in charge of the little flock which had grown to twelve.

The Bahia mission includes the three churches in Bahia, Maceio and Pernambuco; present membership of the first, 76; of the second, 43; and of the third, 20. Bahia is the ecclesiastical capital of the empire. It has a population of 200,000, and within a radius of thirty miles there are 100,000 more. Pernambuco is the third city in size in Brazil, having a population of 175,000. Maceio has 15,000 inhabitants. All these cities are capitals of the provinces in which they are located, and important centres. Bahia has five or six lines of bay and coast steamers, with as many railroads. Pernambuco has several railroads and a line of coast steamers.

One hundred have been baptized into the church in Bahia. Total in Bahia mission—five ordained ministers, three being natives; one hundred and thirty-nine members, and three churches. With two colporters we have sold about 7,000 copies of Scripture; have published 100,000 tracts, books, sermons and papers. All three of our churches pay their hall rent, besides annual contributions to Bible Societies, charitable objects, &c.

On the 25th day of December, 1886, we commenced raising money to buy the lot and property we are using for church purposes; there were over 300$000 (about $140.00) raised. There will be a monthly collection for this object till $5,000.00 are obtained, this being the present value of the property. The building on these grounds, with a little remodeling, will answer all purposes of preaching, school and minor conveniences of a mission.

Romanism, with its pompous worship, cathedrals, street processions and iron-barred convents, has cast its blighting shadow over that beautiful land for four centuries. Romanism is a mixture of Paganism, Judaism and Christianity. It seeks everywhere political control as well as religious domination in matters of belief and conscience. It entwines itself into every profession, industry and art; a large percentage of the population is employed in building its numerous temples, (in Bahia alone there are about one hundred); mending and furnishing the same with gorgeous altars and adornments; thousands are employed in making idols and images of the Holy Spirit, of Jesus, of real and imaginary

saints, which are in the language of Isaias, "more in number than their cities."

We have received a good deal of persecution, and expect to receive it as long as the priests have power or advantage. Notwithstanding this we can see a great change in the public mind of Bahia since our arrival there. Religious liberty is limited and we are only tolerated at present: but there is every indication of an early separation of church and state, and the proclamation of full liberty of conscience and action in matters of religion. Slavery is doomed to extinction, and that within a few years.

Rome has perpetrated the crime of keeping the Bible out of the peoples' hands, and succeeded in keeping them in ignorance both of the Bible and of the world. As a consequence of this general ignorance among the masses, superstition, fanaticism and corruption abound. The priests are notorious for their wickedness. Many in disgust and lack of confidence in their leaders and the absurdities in the "religion of their fathers," are becoming atheists, infidels, and all kinds of unbelievers in religion.

What Brazil needs is an open Bible, a faithful presentation of the way of salvation before infidelity becomes too general, and while the public mind is in a state of transition; also the prayers and gifts of the Lord's people in sustaining its missionaries and workers in directing and giving permanency to the work and plans already begun.

[Since this sketch of the mission was written Snr. Teixeira has been called home to the "Father's house." Brother Joao Baptista has gone to Maceio to take charge of the church there.]

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